



La Torta Festival Tourism in Argao, Cebu: Its Perceived Benefits and Sustainable Practices

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ABSTRACT

La Torta Festival in Argao, Cebu, is more than a celebration of culture and cuisine—it's a thriving example of how tradition fuels sustainable tourism and community development. The study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the festival's impact, specifically on its perceived benefits of the festival within the Argao local community, local government unit (LGU), and Department of Tourism (DOT) and its sustainable practices—in terms of economic, social, and environmental aspects. A quantitative research method utilizing a five-point Likert scale questionnaire was employed, and ANOVA was used to analyze the data. Results showed significant economic benefits, including income opportunities for residents, boosted sales of local products, and enhanced support for small businesses. Social benefits included a strengthened local cultural heritage identity, a stronger bond within the local community, and the realization of the festival's importance. Environmentally, the festival yielded benefits such as more accessible and sufficient garbage cans, well-planned routes, improved CLAYGO practices, and the use of recyclable materials. These findings serve as a comprehensive guide for policy development and strategic management to enhance the La Torta Festival and continue empowering Argao, Cebu.

RESUMO

O estudo avaliou os impactos do turismo na qualidade de vida, incluindo o bem-estar material, comunitário, emocional e de saúde e segurança dos moradores locais. O objetivo era abordar questões sobre como os fatores sociodemográficos moldaram as percepções dos moradores sobre o turismo e seus efeitos em sua qualidade de vida. Embora pesquisas anteriores tenham explorado os diversos impactos do turismo em pequenas comunidades insulares, este estudo se concentrou na Ilha Malapascua para fornecer insights específicos para seu contexto único e preencher uma falta de compreensão localizada. Usando uma abordagem quantitativa, os pesquisadores distribuíram pesquisas para 380 moradores selecionados por amostragem aleatória para examinar seus dados sociodemográficos e seu nível de concordância sobre a influência do turismo. Os resultados mostraram que o turismo afetou positivamente o bem-estar emocional e o bem-estar de saúde e segurança, enquanto os benefícios materiais foram menos significativos. As descobertas revelaram que, embora o turismo tenha melhorado o bem-estar emocional e relacionado à saúde, desafios como custos de vida mais altos persistiram. Este estudo forneceu insights valiosos para formuladores de políticas, pesquisadores e estratégias de turismo que salvaguardam ativos culturais e ambientais e elevaram a qualidade de vida dos moradores locais.

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Introduction

Festivals serve as more than just grand spectacles—they are cultural tapestries that bind communities, reflect shared values, and offer immersive experiences for locals and tourists alike. Across the globe, festivals are celebrated to honor history, express creativity, and deepen social bonds. In the Philippines, a country known for its rich cultural heritage, festivals are part of everyday life, expressing the vibrancy of local identity while also contributing to economic and social progress.

Food-centered festivals have emerged as a central part of tourism, with culinary experiences drawing both domestic and international travelers. Yilmaz (2020) emphasized that festival tourism yields significant economic, sociocultural, and political benefits, positioning it as a catalyst for local development. In this context, food festivals like the La Torta Festival in Argao, Cebu, do more than highlight local flavors—they serve as platforms for sustainable development and cultural preservation.

La Torta Festival is an annual celebration held every September 28–29 that pays tribute to Argao's signature delicacy, the La Torta de Argao. It combines elements of religious devotion, culinary tradition, and cultural expression. According to Nicolas (2017), the festival is deeply rooted in local history and reflects the community's collective identity. However, as Rios (2022) observed, many cultural traditions—including food rituals—are at risk of losing relevance among younger generations, often due to commercialization or lack of cultural education.

This study aims to explore the La Torta Festival's perceived benefits and sustainable practices by examining its impacts across three pillars of sustainability: economic viability, social inclusivity, and environmental stewardship. As Yoopetch (2022) notes, residents' support for tourism development is directly influenced by their perception of tourism's impact on their communities. Thus, stakeholder engagement is crucial. Drawing from Freeman's stakeholder theory (1984), this study incorporates the perspectives of the Local Government Unit (LGU), Department of Tourism (DOT), and the Argao community to analyze collaborative efforts that ensure long-term sustainability.

Unlike studies that focus solely on economic gains, such as Akhundova (2024), this research fills a gap by assessing La Torta Festival's broader impact, including community development and ecological awareness. Butler (2017) and Sharpley and Telfer (2014) both emphasized that when cultural tourism is managed sustainably, it not only supports livelihoods but also preserves heritage and fosters inclusive community participation.

Moreover, the research aligns with two of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). The festival stimulates local entrepreneurship, especially among small vendors and artisans, while also reinforcing the shared cultural legacy that binds the people of Argao. According to the Department of Tourism (2009), heritage festivals like La Torta must be supported as key drivers of inclusive tourism growth. The study thus represents a localized contribution to global sustainability efforts.

Ultimately, this study seeks to guide stakeholders in policy-making and community planning by identifying tangible and intangible outcomes of the La Torta Festival. By doing so, it contributes to the literature on sustainable festival tourism and promotes a model of cultural celebration that uplifts communities while preserving the essence of heritage for future generations.

Review of Related Literature

Festival Tourism

Festivals are important for cultural exchange, environmental development, and economic boost. It is a vital element of human culture, bringing together people to celebrate shared traditions, arts, and gastronomy. The growing importance of festivals has become an integral part of the global tourism industry, drawing events that serve as major attractions that help promote local heritage, cuisine and cultural exchange. Festival tourism plays an important role in the tourism industry. Festivals bring numerous benefits to the destinations where they are held, and more and more events of this same type are being organized around the world, as cited by Ramos & Salgado (2024).

The Philippines has boosted a vibrant celebration of festivities that are deeply rooted in its rich culture and heritage. These festivals not only showcase the unique heritage and diversity of each region but also serve as a testament of the enduring spirit and unity of the Filipino people. Underlying the barriers that hinder the social and environmental sustainability at food tourism festivals from the perspective of the local community and the festival organizers (Thelen & Kim, 2024).

A Filipino trait highlights a distinct quality of Filipinos by pointing out the Tinapay Festival in Cuenca, Batangas (Buted, 2014). This festival is an ode to the diligent bakers or "panaderos" of the town, who have earned it the nickname "Home of the Bakers". Cuenca's Tinapay Festival, held in June, honors the town's diligent bakers, or panaderos, who are responsible for earning the city the moniker "Home of the Bakers." The festival features bread-making competitions and a lively procession to showcase the bakers' final products. They highlighted the progress of others in Cuenca through the industry.

Professionals increased in number as bakeries expanded. "Mega Monay," "Malaking Semada," "Malaking Pandesal," and "Pinoy Pandesal" were launched and shown at the parade (Coliat et al., 2014). The Puto Latik Festival, a contemporary celebration of the traditional feast of San Isidro Labrador, the patron saint of farmers, is one of the city's cultural assets in Biñan City, Laguna. "Latik" relates to the traditional dance "Maglalatik," which first appeared in the town, while "Puto" refers to the well-known Puto Biñan. Community participation in festivals grow in popularity, which benefits the community in many ways. Some organizations anticipate receiving funding due to an event, while others anticipate being acknowledged for their cultural contributions by the general public (Taytay et al., 2023).

Argao's La Torta Festival is a cultural mix of colonial and indigenous elements as depicted in the dance steps, props and costumes, music, and courtship. Its origin epitomized the townspeople's ethos in the light of cultural dualism (Flores et al., 2016). The La Torta Festival is a prime example of how intangible cultural heritage can serve as a living link between the past and the present. Rituals and festive practices during the festival, such as the

preparation of “torta” (a traditional cake), bring the community together, emphasizing cooperation and shared values. These rituals reflect the people’s connection to their place of origin, history that shares collective identity.

The tradition evolved into the La Torta Festival, a popular attraction for tourists in the Philippines. Studying the festival is crucial in fostering appreciation for Cebu's cultural heritage (Flores et al., 2016). The festival provides a sense of pride and identity by showcasing the unique way of life from various regions of the country. This festival reflects a community's values, beliefs, and collective identity (Bulilawa and Cagulada, 2024).

Sustainable Festival Tourism Perceived Benefits

Sustainability is vital for our shared future, according to Pronk (2015). It consists of three pillars: economic, environmental, and social. Its goal is to involve local communities in planning, development, and management. According to Alshboul (2016), efforts have been made to encourage community participation and cooperation, turning it into a practical approach to community development.

Community festivals and events provide cultural, educational, and economic advantages while fostering social interactions and relationships. They showcase a community's highlights, attract visitors, and instill pride and commitment among residents. These events enhance participation and a sense of belonging among rural residents and stakeholders, creating sustainable local strategies (Chiciudean et al., 2021).

A related review from the Dieng Culture Festival in Central Java encourages tourist participation in local community activities, promoting cultural acculturation and integrating local wisdom into tourism development. The community’s active role strongly supports cultural exchange, preserving their identity, heritage, and culture (Haryanto, 2022). The Tinapay Festival in Cuenca, Batangas, provides an equal opportunity for community members with diverse aspirations to participate in tourism activities (Coliat et al., 2014). The income and employment growth indicators can be rephrased as “main measures of economic progress” (Garigos et al., 2018).

A relevant review from the Ati-than festival boosted Kalibo's tourism industry, attracting local and international visitors, generating higher income, improving infrastructure, and increasing economic activities. Municipal and barangay governments allocated a sufficient budget for the festival (Galopez et al., 2011). Another relevant review from the Dieng Culture Festival in Central Java is that nearly 90% of residents derive economic benefits from tourism through various means such as food and souvenir sales, tour guides, transportation services, homestay accommodations, and more.

The community strives to offer quality and affordable facilities for tourists, including unique attractions like the Dieng heating stove. Hence, it has led to the development of creative

home industries, producing souvenirs and Dieng cuisine (Haryanto, 2022). Positive environmental, economic, and social outcomes can be achieved through sustainable events and festivals. Both organizers and attendees have a crucial role in promoting sustainability. Organizers should prioritize a pro-sustainable mindset, while consumers need to embrace sustainable practices (Wee et al., 2017).

A relevant review from Magyar Fesztivál Szövetség, a gastronomy festival in Hungary, practices green elements where “the breakthrough seems to be almost complete,” such as the non-use of plastic cups and the introduction of selective waste collection (Lorincz et al., 2022). Therefore, sustainable event planning offers benefits beyond the environment, including economic gains (e.g., online materials, tap water instead of PET bottles) and social advantages (e.g., community engagement and team building) (Lorincz et al., 2022). These practices can inspire other organizers and drive broader innovation (Black, 2016). Festivals are an effective instrument to educate, raise awareness, and promote sustainable behavior (Lorincz et al., 2022).

Sustainable Festival Tourism Practices

The role of sustainable festival tourism practices has garnered increasing attention in recent years due to the growing recognition of the environmental, social, and economic impacts of festivals on host communities and destinations. These three pillars of sustainability are incorporated into festival tourism and its practices in various festivals as they encompass a multifaceted approach.

Environmental sustainability has shown numerous studies that emphasize the importance of reducing the carbon footprint of festivals through measures such as waste reduction, energy conservation, and promoting eco-friendly transportation options (Jones & Varley, 2018). For instance, Hall (2019) highlighted the effectiveness of waste management, including recycling and composting, in mitigating the environmental impacts of large-scale festivals. Moreover, the concept of 'greener' festivals has gained traction, with initiatives such as using renewable energy sources and implementing water conservation measures (Buckley & Medway, 2016).

Social sustainability within festival tourism revolves around fostering positive interactions between visitors and host communities while preserving local cultures and traditions (Gössling et al., 2020). Research indicates that festivals can serve as platforms for cultural exchange and community engagement, thereby promoting social cohesion and inclusivity (Mules & Faulkner, 2017). The festival's ensuing success resulted from the efforts of committed volunteers, who created a welcoming environment for artists, performers, audiences, and the local neighborhood, primarily serving the local community. The attraction of outsiders as observers or participants tends to strengthen the internal sense of community (Jarman, 2018).

Studies underscore the importance of responsible tourism practices that respect the rights and well-being of local residents, particularly in terms of managing issues related to noise pollution, overcrowding, and cultural appropriation (Richards & Palmer, 2018).

Economic sustainability tourism practices aim to maximize benefits for local economies while minimizing negative impacts such as over-tourism and leakage of revenue (Mowforth & Munt, 2015). Research suggests that strategic planning and collaboration between festival organizers, government agencies, and local businesses are essential for ensuring the equitable distribution of economic gains (Gibson & Connell, 2019). Furthermore, studies emphasize the potential of festivals to stimulate entrepreneurship, create employment opportunities, and support the development of small-scale enterprises within host communities (García-Hernández & Vila, 2020).

Argao, Cebu Community

The municipality of Argao is one of the oldest towns in the province of Cebu, Philippines, a well-known heritage that is home to many local cultural heritage sites including the Spanish-era buildings that furnish its center; the traditional hand-woven hablon, and local pastries such as its renowned torta (Rios, 2022). The origin of Argao's name is similar to that of many other locations in the Philippines, which acquired their names from the area's popular flora or fauna (Famulagan, 2009); that is, according to Avanzado (2023), the term Argao was derived from an abundantly growing plant in the area, known locally as “Sali-Argaw” and was founded by the Spaniards in 1608.

The Argao community is actively involved in several development projects that aim to improve the standard of living for its citizens. The development of infrastructure, healthcare, education, and environmental preservation are the main foci of local government initiatives. Community organizations are essential for advancing social welfare and creating a feeling of cohesion among locals. The community of Argao has agriculture as one of its top development goals (Ruaya, 2019); hence, rice farming in Argao is not as prominent as it once was, because the rice farmers are still marginalized and there are no significant programs in place to improve their well-being or raise their outcome, leading to generally insufficient output (Villegas et al., 2022).

Since the beginning of time, farming techniques have been ingrained in the culture and have influenced all other facets of civilization (Amper et al., 2018) therefore, through the Marketing Enhancement on Community-Based Tourism (CBT) workshop, the Tourism Promotions Board provides capacity-building that would improve their sustainable packaging design, digital marketing, social media management, content creation, and product branding. This can help build the confidence of community members and visitors to return to the community and create a learning process to strengthen tourism in the community (Tourism Promotions Philippines, n.d.).

Torta de Argao

In the Philippines, each city and municipality has a unique cuisine specialization (Austria, 2022), in the northern or Tagalog-speaking areas of the Philippines, the word “torta” describes a particular kind of omelet consisting of eggs with ground meat, fish, potatoes, or vegetables. On the other side in the Visayan area, their torta is a sponge cake frequently offered as a dessert or snack (Manalo, 2021). Torta means cake in Spanish, also it is a flatbread in Spain while in Mexico there is a similar kind of sandwich but in the Philippines, torta refers to omelets. The most commonly consumed kind comprises eggs and mixed eggplant (Austria, 2022).

Cebu is the birthplace of the delicious, spongy pastry known as Argao Torta or Torta a la Argao, it is especially well-known in the municipality of Argao, which is located in southern Cebu (Manalo, 2021). The ingredients for La Torta de Argao, which originated in the Philippines during the Spanish colonial era, include flour, sugar, egg yolks, lard, and *tuba* (sweet, fresh coconut sap or wine). Moreover, the tuba extends La Torta's longevity (Kintanar, 2017), and cooking in a "wood-fired" oven is advised. With this technique, fat from the previous year's celebration—preferably at least a year old—is burned with fuel made from coconut husks and shells (Manalo, 2021).

La Torta de Argao's history dates back to the time of Spanish colonization. Back then, egg whites were used by building contractors to bind coral stones together. Naturally, the egg yolks were not thrown away by the Argaoanons. And so the torta was born (Austria, 2022). One well-known baker of homemade Argao Tortas in this area is Jessie Magallones. She spent years of planning and managing her little torta company. Her business is operated from her house, and she continues traditional baking techniques. This is why locals and visitors appreciate her approach above the marketed appropriate method of making tortas (Cebu About Us at Cebu Bluewaters, n.d.).

Methodology

This research used a quantitative research method to determine the perceived benefits of sustainable practices on the La Torta Festival to the community of Argao, Cebu. The researchers utilized a likert scale-rating survey questionnaire distributed to 380 respondents using a purposive sampling method. The survey included questions designed to examine socio-demographic factors and the respondents' perceptions of the benefits of sustainable practices in the La Torta Festival of Argao, Cebu.

Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive research design, aiming to provide a detailed account and analysis of the subject matter. This approach was further enhanced by employing a survey method, which involved the use of a structured questionnaire as a primary data collection tool. The questionnaire was carefully designed to gather relevant information from respondents,

allowing the researchers to obtain insights, opinions, and factual data necessary to achieve the study's objectives.

Participants

The respondents were selected through purposive sampling to get the perspectives and experiences of various stakeholders which are the Argao community, Local Government Unit (LGU) representatives and the Department of Tourism (DOT). These respondents have been selected based on their knowledge and expertise within the study's domain. The respondents of this study must have at least participated or are familiar with the celebration of the La Torta Festival.

Research Environment

The research was conducted in the Municipality of Argao, Cebu, Philippines. It is situated in the southern part of Cebu. As a first-class municipality in the province of Cebu, it is renowned for its local food festival, the La Torta Festival, which showcases its residents' traditions, culinary expertise, and creative expressions. The setting provides an idea; backdrop for exploring the interplay of culture, community, and festival celebrations. Known for its well-preserved Spanish colonial architecture, scenic coastal landscapes, and strong sense of community, Argao provides an ideal environment for studying festival tourism.

Research Instrument and Data Collection

The study adapted the survey instrument of Luna's (2015) study, "A Festival Impact: The Case of the Baños Festival." The questionnaire was modified to align with the objectives and was validated by different research experts in the field of academe, culture, and experts from the Local Government Unit (LGU) and the Department of Tourism (DOT) to ensure its reliability. Specific changes included revising the focus from "perceived effects" to "perceived benefits" to better capture the intended outcomes. Additionally, certain contents were adjusted to tailor the instrument of the study.

The tool also underwent a pre-test on a similar research environment. During the pre-test phase, it was proven to be effective, yielding positive feedback from respondents. After the successful testing, the researchers gained the approval of the municipal mayor that signaled their visit to the municipality of Argao to personally survey the 380 respondents. In answering the questionnaire the researcher assisted the respondents one by one and explained the items that need to be answered in vernacular to better understand the questions.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts: the first part was about the respondents' demographic profile, and the second part dealt with the benefits of sustainable practices on the festival. The first part of the questionnaire collected information on the respondents' age, highest educational attainment and income bracket. The second part of the questionnaire contained three main categories regarding the three pillars of sustainability: the economic, social, and environmental benefits of sustainable practices on the festival. The instrument will

make use of the five-point Likert scale; 5- Strongly Agree, 4- Agree, 3- Not sure, 2- Disagree, 1- Strongly Disagree. The data on the survey was statistically analyzed by the researcher and was validated by a statistician using the descriptive design.

Data Analysis

The data gathered was treated in various methods. It was tabulated and calculated to get insightful results. The researchers applied frequency and percentage distribution for the respondents' demographics. Moreover, the sustainable practices (economic, social, and environmental) utilized a descriptive design and the one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used for the perceived benefits of the community, LGU, and DOT. This method aimed to identify members of the populace and their personal experiences, perceived benefits of the La Torta Festival and highlighted the advantages of sustainable practices concerning the three pillars of sustainability.

Ethical Considerations

In conducting the study, several ethical considerations were carefully addressed. First, ensuring informed consent from all participants. Informing them about the purpose, procedures, and potential risks and benefits of their involvement. The researchers also fully adhered to the guidelines of the Data Privacy Act of 2012 to safeguard the confidentiality of respondents' identities and securely stored their personal information, restricting access to only those directly involved in the study.

Moreover, efforts were made to avoid causing harm to participants or the community, being mindful of cultural sensitivities, and refraining from actions that may cause offense or distress. Furthermore, it was imperative to present findings accurately and objectively, avoiding biases or misrepresentations that could perpetuate stereotypes or mislead readers about the festival or its participants. By adhering to these ethical considerations, the research was conducted in a manner that respects the rights and well-being of all involved parties.

Results and Discussion

The majority of respondents are in the 18-25 years old (Gen Z) age bracket with a frequency of 196 (51.58%). The largest portion for their highest educational attainment is high school graduates, with a frequency of 137 (36.05%). Lastly, the income bracket of 0-1000 is the most prevalent, with a frequency of 153 (40.26%). These demographic insights are the general and valuable overview of the respondents.

The perceived economic benefits of sustainable practices of the La Torta Festival had a composite mean of 4.19. This result indicates that the respondents agree on economic advantages in the municipality. Respondents perceive the operations benefiting their economy during the festival celebrations and increasing their income or earnings. This shows that the local community, the municipality's local government unit, and the Department of Tourism recognize the festival's importance to the local economy, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.
Perceived Benefits

Perceived Benefits	Economic	Social	Environmental	Total	Interpretation
Argao Local Community	4.169	4.445	4.261	4.292	Moderately Agree
Local Government Unit	4.361	4.514	4.383	4.419	Agree
Department of Tourism	4.204	4.142	4.215	4.187	Moderately Agree
Legend: 4.21-5.00=Strongly Agree; 3.41-4.20=Agree; 2.61-3.40=Neutral; 1.81-2.60=Disagree; 1.00-1.80=Strongly Disagree					

The perceived social benefits of sustainable practices of the La Torta Festival has a composite mean of 4.43. Respondents strongly agree that the festival promotes heritage identity, strengthens community bonds, and underscores its significance by imparting new knowledge. This perceives that the local community, the local government unit of the municipality, and the Department of Tourism value the importance of the social benefits of the La Torta Festival.

The perceived environmental benefits of sustainable practices of the La Torta Festival has a composite mean of 4.26. The data indicates that respondents strongly agree on the environmental benefits of these practices. This suggests that the Argao community, the local government of Argao, and the Department of Tourism recognize and value the environmental benefits associated with celebrating the La Torta Festival sustainably.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the perceptions of the economic benefits of the La Torta Festival among the Argao Local Community (n=317), Local Government Unit (LGU; n=36), and Department of Tourism (n=27). The results revealed no significant differences in perceptions across the three groups, $F(2,377)=1.069, p=0.344$. Descriptive statistics indicate that the LGU reported the highest mean ($M=4.361, SD=0.798$), followed by the Department of Tourism ($M=4.204, SD=0.399$) and the Argao Local Community ($M=4.169, SD=0.766$).

Post hoc comparisons using Tukey's HSD revealed no significant pairwise differences between the groups. Overall, the data suggest that all groups positively perceive the economic benefits, with no statistically significant variation in their assessments. While the LGU had the highest score, the difference in means across the three groups was not statistically significant ($F(2,377)=1.069, p=0.344$). This implies that the stakeholders largely share a positive and similar assessment of the festival's economic impact. The smaller standard deviation in the Department of Tourism group suggests more consistent responses compared to the wider variability seen in the other groups.

Table 2.
One-Way ANOVA

Coding	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
Economic					
Argao Local Community	317	4.169	0.766	0.043	0.184
Local Government Unit	36	4.361	0.798	0.133	0.183
Department of Tourism	27	4.204	0.399	0.077	0.095
Social					
Argao Local Community	317	4.445	0.562	0.032	0.126
Local Government Unit	36	4.514	0.477	0.080	0.106
Department of Tourism	27	4.142	0.272	0.052	0.066
Environmental					
Argao Local Community	317	4.261	0.692	0.039	0.163
Local Government Unit	36	4.383	0.683	0.114	0.156
Department of Tourism	27	4.215	0.282	0.054	0.067

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to assess differences in perceptions of the social benefits among the same three groups. The results showed a statistically significant difference in perceptions, $F(2,377)=4.402, p=0.013$. Descriptive statistics indicate that the LGU had the highest mean ($M=4.514, SD=0.477$), followed by the Argao Local Community ($M=4.445, SD=0.562$) and the Department of Tourism ($M=4.142, SD=0.272$). Post hoc tests using Tukey's HSD revealed significant differences between the Argao Local Community and the Department of Tourism ($MD=0.303, p=0.015$) and between the Department of Tourism and the LGU ($MD=0.372, p=0.019$).

These results suggest that while all groups view the social benefits positively, the Department of Tourism perceives these benefits significantly less favorably compared to the other groups. These results suggest that the Department of Tourism's perception of the festival's contribution to social benefits (e.g., fostering unity or enhancing community pride) is less positive than those of the LGU and the local community. The LGU's high score might

reflect their active role in organizing and promoting the event, which directly involves social engagement.

A one-way ANOVA was performed to examine perceptions of the environmental benefits of the La Torta Festival. The analysis found no significant differences among the three groups, $F(2,377)=0.635, p=0.530$. The LGU reported the highest mean ($M=4.383, SD=0.683$), followed by the Argao Local Community ($M=4.261, SD=0.692$) and the Department of Tourism ($M=4.215, SD=0.282$). Post hoc comparisons using Tukey's HSD revealed no significant pairwise differences. These findings suggest that the three groups share a similar positive perception of the environmental benefits, with no significant variation in their views. Perceptions of environmental benefits were positive and consistent across groups, with means exceeding 4.0.

The Local Government Unit again had the highest mean ($M=4.383, SD=0.683$), followed by the Argao Local Community ($M=4.261, SD=0.692$) and the Department of Tourism ($M=4.215, SD=0.282$). The differences in means were not statistically significant ($F(2,377)=0.635, p=0.530$), indicating that all groups perceived the festival as having a generally positive impact on the environment, such as promoting sustainable practices or reducing waste. However, the Department of Tourism reported a slightly lower mean, which may reflect a more cautious evaluation of the festival's environmental impact.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study concludes that the La Torta Festival yields positive benefits to the Argao Local Community, Local Government Unit, and Department of Tourism. Through rigorous data collection, careful analysis, and critical interpretation, the study shows high results on the economic, social, and environmental pillar, indicating valuable insights into effective practices and policies of the stakeholder and its people. Moreover, the importance of the social and environmental aspects of the festival is highlighted, as festivals often focus on the economic benefit, which diminishes the significance of consolidating the three pillars of sustainability.

The findings of this research highlight the potential of La Torta Festival Tourism in Argao, Cebu, particularly in terms of its perceived benefits and sustainable practices, which underscores the need for further research and investigation in this area. Hence, this study has addressed existing gaps in the literature and presented practical implications based on responses from the LGU, local community, and DOT. The insights provided can assist the community, Local Government Unit, and Department of Tourism in implementing effective strategies and informed policy-making, thereby shaping better outcomes for the La Torta Festival in Argao, Cebu.

Overall, the La Torta Festival demonstrates a successful balance of cultural celebration, environmental responsibility, and economic boost. The festival can be a good benchmark for integrating sustainability into traditional festivities. Hence, the paper contributes to the current knowledge of providing the analysis, and its implications for this approach ensure long-term viability and serve as a model for fostering stewardship within the context of cultural heritage. We hope that our work will give worthwhile discussions, inspire ideas, and lead to looking forward to the successful fulfillment of the La Torta Festival in Argao, Cebu.

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